

97384 - Is the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) the best of creation?

the question

Is there any evidence that our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of creation?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is a great deal of evidence about the virtues and unique characteristics of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), but as far as we know there is no text that clearly states that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of creation. What has been narrated is that he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of mankind and the leader of the sons of Adam.

Muslim (4223) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “I will be the leader of the sons of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, and the first one for whom the grave is opened, and the first one to intercede and the first one whose intercession will be accepted.”

The scholars understood from this text and others which speak of the virtues of our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) that he is the best of Allaah’s creation.

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in Sharh Saheeh Muslim:

This hadeeth indicates that he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is superior to all of creation, because the view of Ahl al-Sunnah is that humans are better than the angels, and he

(peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is superior to humans and others. End quote.

The scholars all described the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) as the best of creation, and it will be sufficient to refer to a few of them, so as to avoid making this article too lengthy.

Imam al-Shaafa'i in al-Umm (4/167)

Imam 'Abd al-Razzaaq al-San'aani in al-Musannaf (2/419)

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah in Majmoo' al-Fataawa (1/313 and 5/127 and 468)

Ibn al-Qayyim in Tahdheeb al-Sunan, hadeeth no. 1787, quoting from 'Awn al-Ma'bood.

Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Baari, commentary on hadeeth no. 6229

Al-Mardaawi in al-Insaaf (11/422)

Al-Aloosi in Rooh al-Ma'aani (4/284)

Al-Taahir ibn 'Ashoor in his Tafseer (2/420)

Al-Sa'di in his Tafseer (51, 185, 699)

Muhammad al-Ameen al-Shanqeeti in Adwa' al-Bayaan (9/215)

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn Baaz in Majmoo' al-Fataawa (2/76, 383)

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: Should we say that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of mankind or the best of creation? Is there any evidence that he is the best of creation as many people say?

They replied:



Many texts in the Qur'aan and Sunnah speak of the greatness of our Prophet Muhammad and his sublime status before his Lord, may He be exalted, through the noble attributes and unique characteristics that Allaah bestowed only upon him, which indicates that he is the best of creation, the most honoured by Allaah and the greatest in status before Him. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Allaah has sent down to you the book (the Qur'aan), and Al-Hikmah (Islamic laws, knowledge of legal and illegal things, i.e. the Prophet's Sunnah — legal ways), and taught you that which you knew not. And Ever Great is the Grace of Allaah unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)"

[al-Nisa' 4:113]

It is difficult to list all the different types of honour that Allaah has bestowed, for example: Allaah took him as a close friend (khaleel); He made him the Seal of His Messengers; He revealed the best of His Books to him, and made his message one that applies to both mankind and the jinn until the Day of Resurrection; He forgave him his past and future sins; He caused miracles to happen at his hand that superseded those of all the Prophets who came before him; he will be the leader of the sons of Adam (on the Day of Resurrection), the first one for whom the grave will be opened, and the first one to intercede and the first one whose intercession will be accepted; in his hand will be a banner of praise on the Day of Resurrection; he will be the first one to cross al-siraat (a bridge across Hell), the first one to knock at the gate of Paradise and the first one to enter it … and many other unique characteristics and miracles that are mentioned in the Qur'aan and Sunnah, which led the scholars to agree unanimously that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the greatest of creation in status before Allaah, may He be exalted. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The Muslims are unanimously agreed that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the greatest of creation in status before Allaah, and no other created being has any status that

is higher than his or any power of intercession that is greater than his.

From what has been mentioned above and elsewhere it is clear that our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of the Prophets and the best of creation, and the greatest of them in status before Allaah, may He be exalted. But in addition to these virtues and unique characteristics, he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is no more than a human being, so it is not permissible to call upon him or seek his help instead of Allaah, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم): 'I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your Ilâh (God) is One Ilaah (God __ i.e. Allaah). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord'"

[al-Kahf 18:110]

And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah (26/35).

Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abd-Allaah Aal al-Shaykh, Shaykh 'Abd-Allaah ibn Ghadyaan, Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) did not confirm that, noting that there is no clear text concerning that, and he said:

The well known view of many scholars is that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of creation.

But in order to be on the safe side we should say: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the leader of the sons of Adam and the best of mankind and the best of the Prophets,

and so on, following what is said in the texts. I do not know of any report which says that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the best of all creation in all senses. … So it is better in such matters to follow what it says in the texts. For example, if someone asks: Did Allaah favour the sons of Adam in general over all other created beings? We would say: No, because Allaah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And indeed We have honoured the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with At-Tayyibaat (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preferment”

[al-Isra’ 17:70]

He did not say “above all of those whom We have created”. Therefore it is better for a person who adhere to that which is mentioned in the texts and not go beyond that. Praise be to Allaah, we know that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is the Seal of the Prophets and the noblest and best of the Messengers, the most honoured of them by Allaah, may He be exalted. The evidence for that in the Qur’aan and Sunnah is well known. As for that for which there is no clear evidence, then in order to be on the safe side we should refrain from that. But it is well known that you will find many scholars saying that Muhammad is the noblest of creation. End quote from Liqaa’aat al-Baab il-Maftoohah (53/11).